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<b>PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT</b>  Address to: Mail Stop AF Commissioner for Patents P.O. Box 1450 Alexandria, VA 22313-1450	Attorney Docket Confirmation No.	UCAL250CON4 4393
	First Named Inventor	M. LaVail
	Application Number	08/897,390
	Filing Date	July 21, 1997
	Group Art Unit	1647
	Examiner Name	R.C. Hayes
	Title	<i>Prevention of retinal injury and degeneration by specific factors</i>

Sir:

This Preliminary Amendment is being filed concurrently with a Request for Continued Examination. This Preliminary Amendment is responsive to the final Office Action dated February 24, 2003, for which a three-month period for response was given, making this response due on or before May 24, 2003. *A Petition for a three-Month Extension of Time is submitted herewith, making this amendment due on or before August 24, 2003.* Accordingly, this Preliminary Amendment is timely filed.

In view of the remarks put forth below, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

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